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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2006

THIS REPORT PRESENTS A QUICK LOOK AT THE TURKISH PRESS:

In Today's Papers

State of the Union
Hurriyet/Milliyet/Sabah/Vatan/Zaman/Cumhuriye t and others:
Turkish papers give extensive coverage to the President's
State of the Union address, focusing on his assertion of the
continued need for US leadership in the world. Papers
emphasize that the President pointed to 'radical Islam' as
being the greatest enemy of the United States and add that
he 'indirectly' turned down a cease-fire proposal from bin-
Ladin by saying that the US will not 'step back' because 'if
we do, they will carry the war to US shores.' Papers also
highlight the President's admonition that Tehran will not be
allowed to produce nuclear weapons and his warning to Iran
to stop supporting terrorism. 'Iranians are taken hostage
by a small group of mullahs who are isolated from their
people,' Bush stressed. The President's remarks on the
Broader Middle East, his call on the Egyptian government to
permit a peaceful opposition to decrease the appeal of
radicalism, and his call on Hamas to renounce violence and
recognize Israel are also highlighted.

Writing in tabloid "Bugun", Cengiz Candar noted that the
tone and messages of the SOTU provides a good indication of
the US approach to world affairs. Candar observed,
"President Bush did not step back from his rhetorical
commitment to democracy and freedom, despite the case of
Hamas. His tone on Hamas was quite flexible, which
indicated that when Hamas takes the necessary steps, it
could have a place in American foreign policy."

Commenting in Islamist opinion maker "Yeni Safak", Ibrahim
Karagul contended that "the speech was nothing more than
empty rhetoric, since the US itself poses the biggest threat

to democracy, freedom, justice, human rights, and prosperity."

Ahmadinejad Responds to Bush Remarks on Iran
Hurriyet/Milliyet/Sabah/Yeni Safak/Zaman/Cumhuriyet and others: Papers highlight the response to President Bush's remarks on Iran by President Ahmadinejad, who said that those who support the "Zionist regime" in Israel and the destruction of Palestine cannot talk to Iran about human rights. Ahmadinejad added that 'those responsible' will be tried in a people's tribunal soon. The Iranian President also stressed that the nuclear plant in Iranian city Busehr will be activated by the end of the year.

Reaction Grows to the Publication of Prophet Cartoons
Hurriyet, Milliyet and Aksam highlighted that in a show of solidarity with Danish daily Jyllands-Posten, French, German, Italian, and Spanish newspapers republished its controversial caricatures of the Prophet Muhammed. The drawings provoked emotion in the Muslim world because Islamic tradition bars any depiction of the prophet. Reaction is growing in Turkey to the publication of these caricatures, with members of the union of the Turkish Religious Affairs Directorate (Diyanet Sen) placing black wreaths in front of the Danish and Norwegian embassies. The union demanded that the two countries apologize for the cartoons while calling on the Turkish government to boycott Danish and Norwegian goods.

Debate Over Financial Disclosures by Party Leaders
Hurriyet/Milliyet/Sabah/Cumhuriyet/Zaman/Yeni Safak and others: The lead story in most dailies is Prime Minister Erdogan's alleged decision to reveal his personal wealth

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amid a row among political parties over whether politicians should be required to make such declarations. "Radikal" frontpages that unlike the practice in Turkey, details about the finances of President Bush and members of the US Congress are readily available on the Internet.

French FM Visits Turkey
Hurriyet/Milliyet/Sabah/Zaman/Cumhuriyet and others: At a joint press conference with Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, visiting French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy called for the resumption of talks on Cyprus to reach a satisfactory settlement, papers report. Douste-Blazy said the issue should be resolved under the UN umbrella. The French FM refrained from expressing clear support for the Turkish position on Cyprus, and called on Ankara to open its ports and airports to Greek Cypriots and recognize Cyprus, as well as to acknowledge Armenian genocide claims, say papers. Gul said Turkey will only recognize Cyprus when both sides work agree to a permanent solution under the auspices of the UN.

Turkish, US Ambassadors Discuss New Natural Gas Pipeline with Niyazov
Radikal reports that in an effort to block the Russian monopoly over natural gas reserves in Central Asia, Turkey and the US have joined forces. After Russian President Putin's offer to Turkmenistan to buy its natural gas and carry it to international markets through Blue Stream pipeline, the Turkish and US ambassadors in Ashgabat visited the Turkmen president to explain the hazards of selling his country's natural gas to Russia. The two ambassadors submitted to Niyazov a plan for building a new natural gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan. The new 230-km pipeline would be constructed under the Caspian Sea and would carry 16 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually, says the report.

Turkey-Israel Agree to Abandon Manavgat Project
Dunya, Milliyet: Turkey's economic/political daily "Dunya" and mass-appeal "Milliyet" report that Turkey and Israel have agreed to abandon the Manavgat project, launched 14

years ago, to carry water from Turkey to Israel, saying that the parties were now working on new projects to carry water to Israel, Palestine, and Jordan from the Goksu River in Turkey.

TV HIGHLIGHTS

Rumsfeld Presents 'New US Defense Doctrine'

NTV: Turkey's leading all-news broadcaster NTV reported that Defense Secretary Rumsfeld submitted to the US Congress a 'new US defense doctrine' focused on a 'long war against terrorists and extremists that will continue for an undetermined period.' The 'doctrine' reportedly emphasizes the formation of new counter-terrorism US special forces and has as its main goal the prevention of the spread of WMD.

FROM THE WIRES

European Heroin Smuggling in Turkish Hands

International Wire Services: A report released Tuesday by the Council of Europe on heroin smuggling said that drug trafficking in countries such as Germany, Britain, and the Netherlands was largely conducted by Turkish crime organizations, with heroin smuggling activities being run by the Turkish mafia in Germany, and drugs taken into England and the Netherlands by the same groups. Since 2003, 34 percent (18,019 kilos) of all heroin seized around the world had been confiscated in Europe, the report said. Of this total, over one quarter (4,705 kilos) was seized in Turkey.

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